

CLAREMONT

• LOPRESTI

• ADAMS

EXCALIBUR™



DIRECT EDITION



7 59606 05540 1

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LOPRESTI
JOHNSON

I am Charles Xavier. I am a mutant. I have a way that mutants and humans might live together in peace and harmony. Hatred and fear between these two races destroyed the island-nation of Genosha and slaughtered 16 million people. From the ashes of that tragedy I hope to build a new and better world for all the Earth's children—before it's too late.

PREVIOUSLY

EXCALIBUR

"THE DEVIL'S OWN"



MAGNETO's daughter WANDA MAXIMOFF, the Avenger known as the SCARLET WITCH, has gone mad and lost control of her reality-altering powers, going on a destructive spree against her fellow Avengers that left the team in ruins. But before they could properly deal with her, Magneto arrived from his island home of Genosha to spirit her away.

Returning to Genosha with his daughter, Magneto appealed to CHARLES XAVIER to use his formidable powers of telepathy to restore her sanity. But after six months of increasingly frustrating effort, Xavier has made little progress on Wanda's tortured mind. Suspecting that Wanda's problems go beyond the merely psychological, he has turned to an old friend for help: DR. STEPHEN STRANGE, Earth's *Sorcerer Supreme*.

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THEY HEAR US
COMING MILES
AWAY.

CARMEN'S FAULT
JUST TO ANNOY
THE BRASS, HE
CELEBRATES EVERY
SUCCESSFUL
MISSION BY
PLAYING THE
STONES, VOLUME
PUMPED TO THE
MAX. TODAY IT'S
"PAINT IT BLACK."

PILOTS
ARE
CRAZY

BUT NO LESS SO,
I SUPPOSE, THAN
THEIR CREW

THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT!

The Devil's Own:
CONCLUSION

By Chris
Claremont
& Aaron
Lopresti



PARTICULARLY
WHEN OUR
SPECIALTY IS
"SEARCH AND
RESCUE."

MY NAME
IS CHARLES
XAVIER.

I'M A CAPTAIN
IN THE UNITED
STATES ARMY.

MY COUNTRY'S AT
WAR. MY CALL-SIGN IS
"GOOD SHEPHERD."

IF YOU'RE CUT
OFF BEHIND
ENEMY LINES,
OR JUST
PLAIN LOST...

...IF THE
MISSION'S
IMPOSSIBLE...

I'M THE
GUY WHO GETS
THE CALL TO
BRING
YOU HOME.

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& Vancata
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I'M TOLD I'M THE
BEST THERE IS AT
WHAT I DO

THAT'S
ALSO
WHAT OUR
HOOCH-
MATE SAYS
ABOUT
HIMSELF.



I'VE SAVED
HIS LIFE OUT
IN THE
BOONIES,
AND HE'S
SAVED MINE.

BUT
WE'RE
STILL
NOT
FRIENDS



CHARLEY,
WE'RE
SHORT!

ONE MORE
WAKE-UP
AND WE ARE
DONE WITH
THIS
RATHOLE.



DEAR LORD
IN HEAVEN,
PLEASE NO
SAPPERS, NO
SURPRISES,
'CAUSE
TONIGHT WE
PARTY!

AND TOMORROW,
WE ARE ON THAT
GREAT SILVER BIRD
BACK TO THE
WORLD!



NEXT TIME
I SMELL
THERESA'S
PERFUME, IT
WON'T BE ON
A LETTER!

I WON'T
HAVE TO LOOK
AT PHOTOS
ANYMORE--I CAN
KISS THE REAL
DEAL!



CHARLEY, YOU
KNOW THERESA
AN' I, WE'RE
ENGAGED.

CONGRATU-
LATIONS,
AGAIN.

I DIDN'T
WANT TO ASK
BEFORE NOW.
DIDN'T WANT TO
JINX EITHER OF
US, BUT...

...I WANT
YOU TO BE
MY BEST
MAN.



AIN'T GONNA HAPPEN, BUB.

LEAST, NOT ON YOUR SCHEDULE.

CHUCK RE-LIPPED FOR ANOTHER TOUR.



BULL!

IT'S TRUE, CARMEN.

THEN I'M STAYIN', TOO!

ABSOLUTELY NOT.



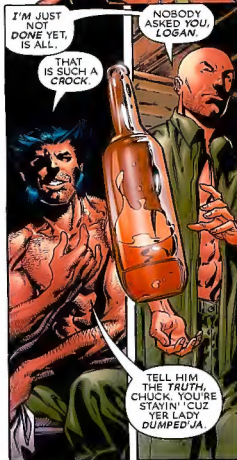
THE HELL I'M NOT!

WHO'S GONNA BE YOUR PILOT? WHO'S GONNA LOOK AFTER YOUR SKINNY, SORRY, IVY-LEAGUE BUTT?

I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO LEARN TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.

CHARLEY, THIS IS SERIOUS!

GO HOME, CARMEN. MARRY THERESA, HAVE THOSE KIDS, LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER. YOU'VE EARNED THAT, AND MORE.



I'M JUST NOT DONE YET, IS ALL.

NOBODY ASKED YOU, LOGAN.

THAT IS SUCH A CROCK.

TELL HIM THE TRUTH, CHUCK. YOU'RE STAYIN' 'CUZ YER LADY DUMPED'JA.



NO WAY.

MOIRA?!

NO WAY!



LETTER CAME WHILE HE WAS IN THE HOSPITAL, AFTER OUR LAST OP.

NEVER WANTS TO SEE HIM AGAIN.



BUT YOU GUYS WERE---! SHE WAS---!

MAN, THAT'S COLD.



CHANGE THE SUBJECT, MARINE.

ALL THE MORE REASON FOR ME TO STAY.

YOU NEED YOUR BUDS, CHARLEY. YOU SHOULDN'T FACE THIS ALONE.



ARE YOU REALLY SO BLOODY THICK?

IF ANYTHING, THIS IS REASON FOR YOU TO GO!

YOU'VE PUSHED YOUR LUCK WAY PAST ITS LIMIT, CARMEN. YOU'VE GOT YOUR WHOLE FUTURE IN YOUR GRASP.

DON'T YOU DARE SCREW IT UP.



AS FOR YOU-- FOR THE LAST TIME, KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF MY STUFF!

THIS IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!



FASCINATING.

?

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ANSWER A CALL FOR HELP...

...YOU NEVER KNOW QUITE WHERE IT WILL LEAD.

STEPHEN STRANGE?

WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING HERE?

YOU INVITED ME.



I WANTED HELP TREATING THE MADNESS OF THE SCARLET WITCH...

...NOT TO GO STROLLING THROUGH MY MEMORIES.

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THERE'S NO CONNECTION?



THIS ISN'T WHAT I EXPECTED WHEN I ASKED FOR YOUR HELP.

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN!

WHERE BETTER FOR WANDA TO HIDE THAN THE PLACES IN YOUR PSYCHE YOU WON'T GO?



I'M SIMPLY USING MAGIC AS A TOOL FOR BOTH THERAPY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS.

BECAUSE YOURS IS THE VIEWPOINT PSYCHE, YOU DEFINE THE SETTING.

MAGNETO, BEING THE OBJECT, DEFINES MUCH OF THE JOURNEY WE MUST TAKE.

WANDA, AS YOU'VE JUST SEEN, IS THE WILD CARD.



BUT WHY SET THE SCENARIO AT THIS PARTICULAR POINT IN MY LIFE?

HOW OLD ARE YOU HERE?

WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING?



CONSIDER:

IN CONTEXT, YOU GRADUATED COLLEGE WITH HONORS AT SIXTEEN, TWO YEARS AT OXFORD, WHERE YOU MET AND FELL IN LOVE WITH MOIRA MacTAGGART.

AT NINETEEN, YOU ENLISTED, O.C.S., COMMISSION, OFF TO WAR.

FROM HERE, BECAUSE OF THAT FATEFUL LETTER FROM MOIRA, YOU WANDER--TO EUROPE, TO ISRAEL, WHERE YOU MEET MAGNETO.

AND GABRIELLE HALLER.



SHE'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS!

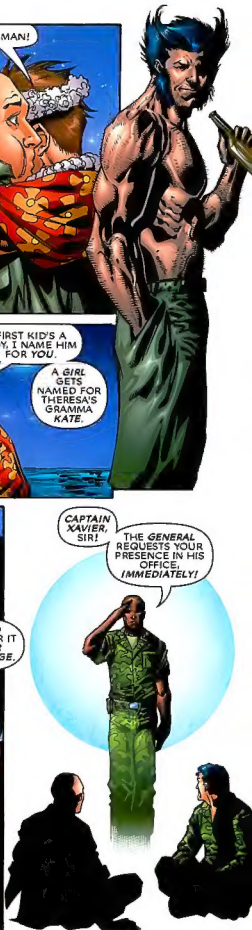
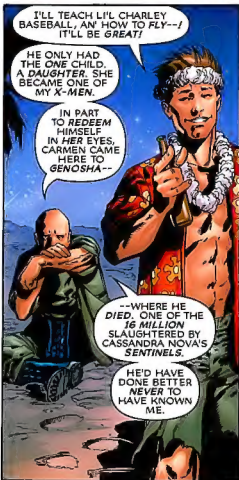
TOUCHY.

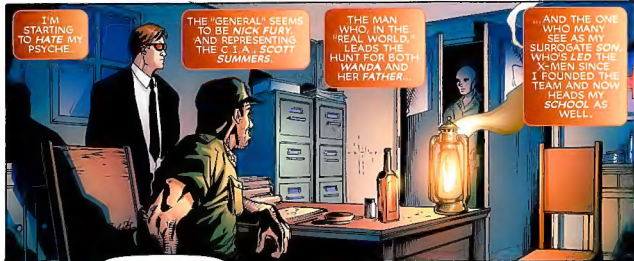
WHY IS THIS SUDDENLY ALL ABOUT ME?

CHARLES, YOU'RE A TELEPATH. YOUR PATIENT, THE SCARLET WITCH, MANIPULATES REALITY.

IF YOU'RE CONFLICTED, AMBIVALENT IN YOUR PURPOSE, HOW CAN YOU HELP HER?

YOUR GUILTS BECOME WEAPONS SHE CAN USE TO KEEP YOU AWAY.





I'M
STARTING
TO HATE MY
PSYCHE

THE "GENERAL" SEEMS
TO BE NICK FURY
AND REPRESENTING
THE C.I.A., SCOTT
SUMMERS.

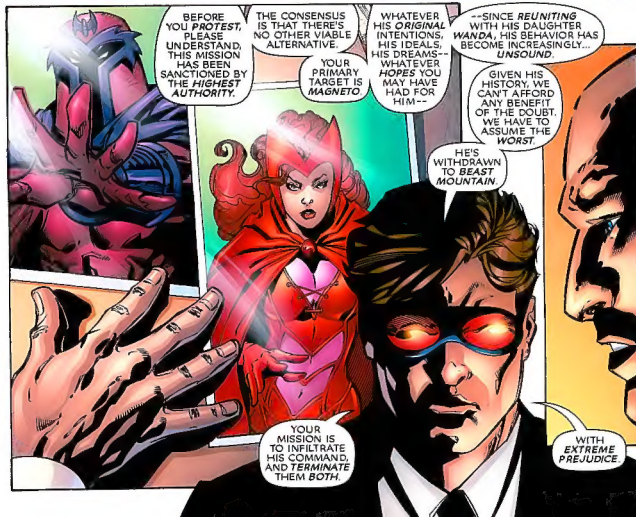
THE MAN
WHO, IN THE
"REAL WORLD,"
LEADS THE
HUNT FOR BOTH
WANDA
AND HER FATHER...

...AND THE ONE
WHO MANY
SEE AS MY
SURROGATE SON,
WHO'S LED THE
X-MEN SINCE
I FOUNDED THE
TEAM AND NOW
HEADS MY
SCHOOL AS
WELL.

WE HAVE A UNIQUE
SITUATION, CAPTAIN,
WHICH REQUIRES YOUR
UNIQUE SKILLS.

THING IS, THIS
AIN'T YER USUAL
SEARCH AND
RESCUE

I'M AFRAID
THIS IS
SEARCH AND
DESTROY.



BEFORE
YOU PROTEST,
PLEASE
UNDERSTAND,
THIS MISSION
HAS BEEN
SANCTIONED BY
THE HIGHEST
AUTHORITY.

THE CONSENSUS
IS THAT THERE'S
NO OTHER VIABLE
ALTERNATIVE.

YOUR
PRIMARY
TARGET IS
MAGNETO

WHATEVER
HIS ORIGINAL
INTENTIONS,
HIS IDEALS,
HIS DREAMS--
WHATEVER
HOPES YOU
MAY HAVE
HAD FOR
HIM--

--SINCE REUNITING
WITH HIS DAUGHTER
WANDA, HIS BEHAVIOR HAS
BECOME INCREASINGLY...
UNSOOUND.

GIVEN HIS
HISTORY, WE
CAN'T AFFORD
ANY BENEFIT
OF THE DOUBT.
WE HAVE TO
ASSUME THE
WORST.

HE'S
WITHDRAWN TO
BEAST MOUNTAIN.

YOUR
MISSION IS
TO INFILTRATE
HIS COMMAND,
AND TERMINATE
THEM BOTH.

WITH
EXTREME
PREJUDICE



WAS THIS
WHAT YOU
EXPECTED,
CHARLES?

MAGNETO
MUST
BE DOING
THIS SOMEHOW.
HE'S MORE
AFRAID OF HIM-
SELF THAN
I AM.

BUT TO
DEMAND THAT
YOU KILL HIM,
AND HIS
DAUGHTER?

HE'S
DESPERATE.

WILL
YOU, CHARLES?
CAN
YOU?



WHY DO
YOU THINK
THIS
SCENARIO'S
SET IN MY
WAR?

PERHAPS
HE'S RIGHT,
PERHAPS THIS
IS THE ONLY
WAY.

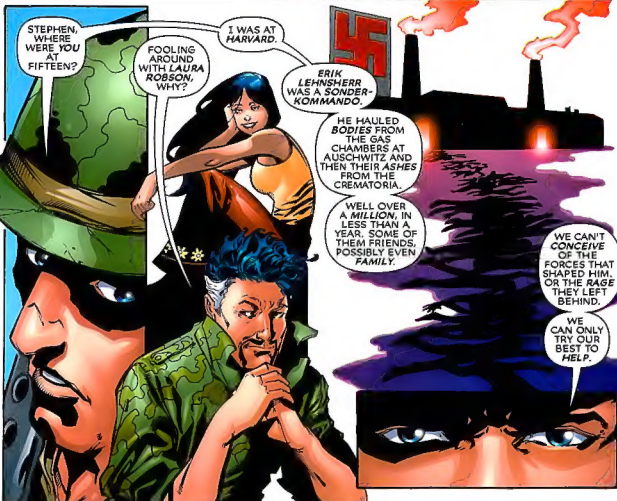
I BELIEVE IN
HIM, STEPHEN. TO
THE CORE OF MY
BEING, I KNOW HE'S
FUNDAMENTALLY
A GOOD AND
DECENT MAN.

YET
ALWAYS,
NO MATTER
HOW HARD
HE TRIES--

CHARLES,
HE WIELDS
FUNDAMENTAL
FORCES OF
NATURE.

BUT OUR INTELLECT,
OUR PHYSICAL BEING--
AND WHO KNOWS, MAYBE
OUR SPIRITUAL ONE AS
WELL--ARE ALL COMPOSED
AND SHAPED BY THOSE
SELFSAME FORCES.

FOR HIM,
THIS MAY BE
AKIN TO TRYING TO
ALTER THE COURSE
OF THE MISSISSIPPI.
IN THE END, THE
PRIMAL PATTERNS--
THE ULTIMATE
DESTINATION--
CANNOT BE
DENIED.



STEPHEN,
WHERE
WERE YOU
AT
FIFTEEN?

FOOLING
AROUND
WITH LAURA
ROBSON,
WHY?

I WAS AT
HARVARD.

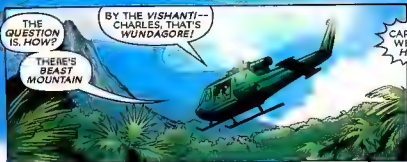
ERIK
LEHNSHERR
WAS A SONDER-
KOMMANDO.

HE HAULED
BODIES FROM
THE GAS
CHAMBERS AT
AUSCHWITZ AND
THEN THEIR ASHES
FROM THE
CREMATORIA.

WELL OVER
A MILLION, IN
LESS THAN A
YEAR. SOME OF
THEM FRIENDS,
POSSIBLY EVEN
FAMILY.

WE CAN'T
CONCEIVE OF
THE FORCES THAT
SHAPED HIM.
OR THE RAGE
THEY LEFT
BEHIND.

WE
CAN ONLY
TRY OUR
BEST TO
HELP.



THE QUESTION IS...HOW?

THERE'S BEAST MOUNTAIN

BY THE VISHANTI-- CHARLES, THAT'S WUNDAGORE!

CAP N-- WE'RE HIT!

THOSE WHO WOULDST THREATEN THE HOME OF THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY...

...MUST FIRST FACE THE RIGHTEOUS WRATH OF SIR RAPTOR!

THAT'S A DAMN DINOSAUR!!



I'M LOSING POWER!

WE'RE GOING DOWN!

PUT A GUN ON HIM, SOMEBODY!

HE'S COMING 'ROUND AGAIN--

--ARRGH!



FASCINATING

I'M STARTING TO HATE THAT WORD

IF MAGNETO TRULY WANTS YOU TO STOP HIM, CHARLES...



...HE CERTAINLY ISN'T MAKING THINGS EASY.



WHAT'S THE POINT OF THIS?

DURING THE WAR, YOU LOST THIS CREW

ON OUR FIRST MISSION, I ALMOST DIED AS WELL.

I GOT MY "MILLION DOLLAR WOUND," THE ONE THAT ENDED MY MILITARY CAREER.



WHERE ARE WE NOW? THIS DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANY JUNGLE

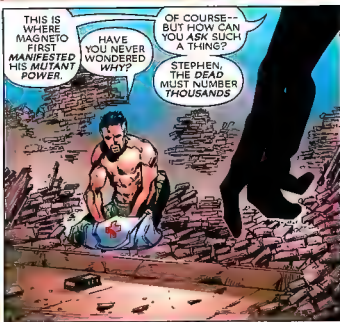
THE RUSSIAN CITY OF VINNITSA.

MAGNETO UNLEASHED A FORCE PULSE HERE, YEARS AGO. I USED TO RUN SIMULATIONS OF IT IN THE DANGER ROOM, SO THE X-MEN WOULD UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY WERE UP AGAINST.

EVERYTHING THAT'S FERROUS METAL--NAILS, I-BEAMS, JOISTS, WHATEVER--JUST TEARS APART. THAT'S WHAT BRINGS DOWN THE BUILDINGS.



AS FOR THE PEOPLE-- INSTANTANEOUS, TERMINAL DISRUPTION OF THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM.



THIS IS WHERE MAGNETO FIRST MANIFESTED HIS MUTANT POWER.

HAVE YOU NEVER WONDERED WHY?

OF COURSE-- BUT HOW CAN YOU ASK SUCH A THING?

STEPHEN, THE DEAD MUST NUMBER THOUSANDS



TIME, I THINK, TO EMPLOY THE ALL-SEEING EYE OF AGAMOTTO. TO PEEL BACK THE VEILS OF THE PAST



THE SOVIETS ERASED ALL MENTION OF THIS EVENT

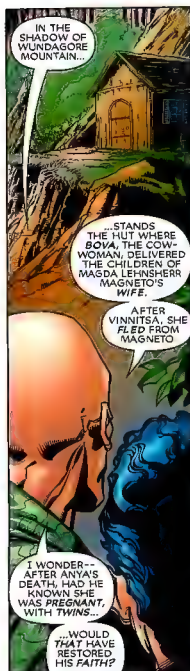
ACCORDING TO RUSSIAN HISTORY, THE CITY WAS RAZED AND ITS PEOPLE MASSACRED BY THE NAZIS.

IN A WAY, PERHAPS THEY WERE

IF THIS IS ALL INSIDE MY HEAD, CAN THAT TRINKET WORK?



THE EYE AND I ARE NOT BOUND BY HUMAN LIMITATIONS





OR SO I
THOUGHT.

PERHAPS
WE BOTH
SPOKE TOO
SOON



WHAT'S
THAT?

THE
FLAMES
OF THE
FALTINE.



NOT OF
YOUR
MAKING, I
ASSUME.

HARDLY

I'M AFRAID
THIS IS AS
FAR AS I CAN
GO, MY FRIEND.
WHATEVER
MAGNETO AND
HIS CHILD HAVE
PLANNED...



...I'M
NOT
TO BE A
PART OF
IT.



GO, CHARLES.
NOW!

I'LL COVER
YOUR BACK!

BUT--!

DON'T ARGUE!
THIS IS NOTHING
EVEN YOU CAN
HELP WITH.

NOTHING
I CAN DARE
ALLOW YOU
TO FACE



STRANGE!

I KNOW NOT
BY WHAT POWER
YOU HAVE
BROUGHT ME TO
THIS PLACE...

...BUT YOU WILL
PAY FOR SUCH
EFFRONTERY--

--FIRST
WITH YOUR
MISBEGOTTEN
LIFE.

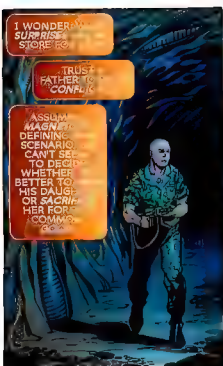
...AND
ULTIMATELY,
WITH YOUR
SOUL!

TO
FIGHT
DOR
BETTER

THE
DORMANT

TIME AND AGAIN DOR
TRIED TO CLAIM THE
HIS TOWN AND
OCCASION STEPHEN
HAS STOOD, USUALLY
TO BAT

ONLY
OF THE
WITCH GOD
BROUGHT
DEMONIC
OF HER
VOLITION
BEING SO
MAN



I WONDER
SURPRISE
STORE FOR

TRUST
FATHER TO
CONFLU

ASSUM
MAGNET
DEFINING
SCENARIO
CAN'T SEE
TO DECIDE
WHETHER
BETTER TO
HIS DAUGH
OR SACRIF
HER FOR
COMMUN
GOOD



IS HE PUTTING
ME IN A POSITION
WHERE I WON'T HAVE
A CHOICE?

I'M A TEACHER,
ERIK, NOT AN
ASSASSIN

SUCH
A NOBLE
SENTIMENT
DEAR
BROTHER

BUT I LIVE
INSIDE YOUR
HEART AND
SOUL.

I KNOW
THE
TRUTH



I AM
THE DARK
MIRROR
OF YOUR
LIFE

THROUGH ME
I WELCOME YOU
TO YOUR BLACK
BUG ROOM.

THE
REPOSITORY OF
ALL YOU MOST
REGRET



AND
FEAR!

CASSANDRA
NOVA!



CAREFUL

THEY'RE

NOT

JUST

FOR

SHOW.

BRAKA

BRAKA

ONE
MISTAKE,
YOU'RE
DINNER.

WELL--
ISN'T THIS A
SURPRISE!



GABY
HALLER--AS
I REMEMBER
YOU BEST!

MY DEAR,
SWEET
CHARLES!



NO--
THIS IS
WRONG!

I BEG YOUR PARDON?

WHAT A
BRILLIANT
PLOT.

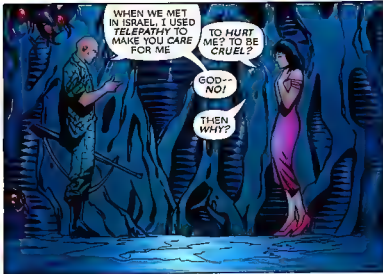
TRAPPING
STEPHEN
WITH HIS
GREATEST
FOE--



--AND ME
WITH MY
GREATEST
SHAME.

I MANIPULATED
YOUR
EMOTIONS,
GABY

IS THAT
WHAT I AM
TO YOU?



WHEN WE MET
IN ISRAEL, I USED
TELEPATHY TO
MAKE YOU CARE
FOR ME

TO HURT
ME? TO BE
CRUEL?

GOD--
NO!

THEN
WHY?



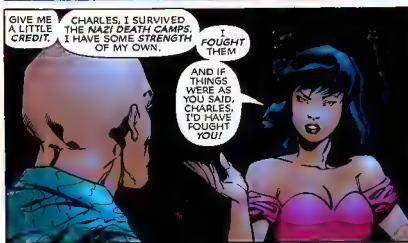
I
I WAS
ALONE I
WAS SO
LONELY



SO WAS I.

THE
PAIN--THE
NEED--WAS
MUTUAL.

I TOOK
ADVANTAGE
OF YOU.



GIVE ME
A LITTLE
CREDIT.

CHARLES, I SURVIVED
THE NAZI DEATH CAMPS.
I HAVE SOME STRENGTH
OF MY OWN.

I
FOUGHT
THEM

AND IF
THINGS
WERE AS
YOU SAID,
CHARLES,
I'D HAVE
FOUGHT
YOU!





WHO SAYS THIS IS JUST YOUR DREAM?

ARE YOU SAYING THIS IS REAL?

HOW SHOULD I KNOW?

...NOT THE WORLD'S PREMIER TELEPATH...

CONSIDERING AT THIS VERY MOMENT, I'M SITTING IN A DIPLOMATIC AUDIENCE LISTENING TO YOUR PRESIDENT QUOTE CAMUS.

WILL WONDERS NEVER CEASE?

I'M ISRAEL'S FOREIGN MINISTER

...CHARLES, IS THAT MUSIC SCHUBERT?



HAVEN'T A CLUE, I NEVER MUCH CARED FOR HIM.

MOIRA'S THESIS ADVISOR PLAYED SCHUBERT, WHEN SHE WAS WORKING FOR HER DOCTORATE THEY WERE VERY CLOSE



SHE LOVED IT

I HATE IT

THERE WAS A DOCTOR AT THE CAMP. GOD, CHARLES, HOW COULD ANYONE ACT SO KINDLY TO US, YET BE SO EVIL?

ALL I REMEMBER IS THAT HE PLAYED SCHUBERT CONSTANTLY, AND HE WAS AN ALBINO



CHARLES, WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'VE JUST TURNED AS PALE AS HE WAS.

IT'S-- NOTHING

GABY, I HAVE TO GO



I UNDERSTAND



BUT BELIEVE THIS, CHARLES. YOU WERE MY SALVATION

YOU HELPED TRANSFORM MY NIGHTMARES BACK INTO DREAMS YOU HELPED ME FIND ONCE MORE THE CAPACITY TO HOPE, AND TO TAKE FROM THAT HOPE JOY.

BETWEEN US, THERE IS NOTHING TO REGRET



...AND NOTHING TO FORGIVE



THERE IT IS,
THAT MUSIC,
SCHUBERT

CAN
COINCE

AUSCH
ATION



IN THE WUNDAGO
STRONGHOLD OF HER
WYNDHAM, THE SON
WIZARD WHO CAUGHT
THE HIGH EVOLUTION

WYNDHAM
HAD AN ASSISTANT..

THAT
WOULD BE
ME.

WELCOME,
CHARLES
XAVIER.

SINISTER!



CAN YOU
APPRECIATE THE
IRONYP?

I, PLAYING
WYNDHAM'S
EAGER
ACOLYTE...

...WHEN
HIS OWN
RESEARCHES
AND DISCOVERIES
WERE BASED ON
THE WORK OF
THE VICTORIAN-
ERA, GENETICIST,
NATHANIEL
ESSEX

COME NOW,
DEAR BOY, IS IT
REALLY SO HARD
TO CONNECT
THE DOTS?

ESSEX BECAME
SINISTER AND IN ONE
GUISE OR ANOTHER
HAS BEEN A CRITICAL
PART OF YOUR
COLLECTIVE HISTORY
EVER SINCE.

I SETTLED
FOR MOIRA
MAGTAGART AT
OXFORD, BUT YOU,
CHARLES, WERE THE
PRIZE I REALLY
WANTED.



BUT YOU HAD TO PLAY THE HERO...
--AND RUSH AWAY TO WAR.



YOU FORGET, ESSEX, WHEN A MAN GOES TO WAR--



--HE LEARNS HOW TO KILL



I WONDER, IF YOU PULL THAT TRIGGER, WILL I TRULY DIE?



I'M FEELING EMPIRICAL. LET'S FIND OUT

YOU KNOW, OF COURSE, THIS ISN'T ALTOGETHER ABOUT ME.

YOUR X-MEN, CYCLOPS, AND PHOENIX, WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN MY CREATION.



PERHAPS OVER THE GENERATIONS, I RETURNED THE FAVOR.

WHAT A CONCEPT, CHARLES!

YOU FOUNDED THE X-MEN, YOU TEACH MUTANTS...

...BUT SUPPOSE I WERE THEIR TRUE PROGENITOR!



LIAR!



PERHAPS.

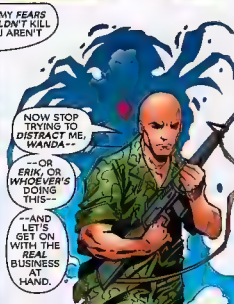
IF YOU KILL ME, YOU'LL NEVER KNOW.



THIS IS NONSENSE. YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A NIGHTMARE.



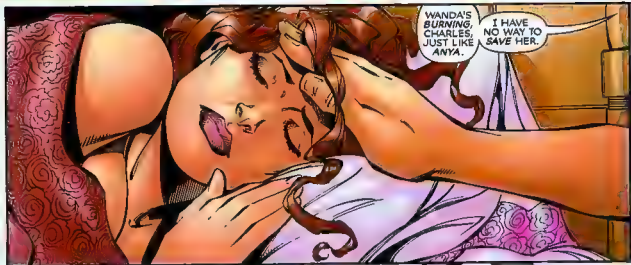
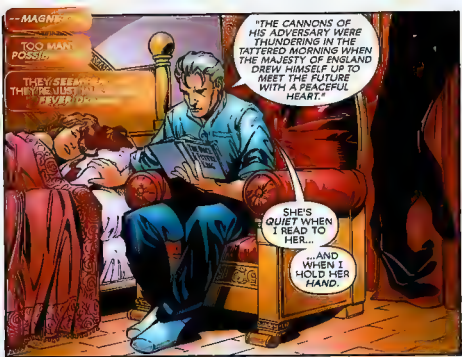
A SHAPE GIVEN TO MY FEARS AND DOUBTS. I COULDN'T KILL YOU BECAUSE YOU AREN'T REAL.



NOW STOP TRYING TO DISTRACT ME, WANDA--

--OR ERIK, OR WHOEVER'S DOING THIS--

--AND LET'S GET ON WITH THE REAL BUSINESS AT HAND.



OLD PATTERNS,
AUTOMATIC
RESPONSES.

THIS IS THE
WAY IT'S ALWAYS
BEEN BETWEEN
US. THERE'S NEVER
ANY TIME TO THINK--
I'M FAR TOO
DANGEROUS.

THE
CONSEQUENCES
OF A MISTAKE
ARE FAR
TOO DIRE.

ERIK,
WHY AM I
HERE?

WHAT ELSE CAN
I DO? I CANNOT
LET HER DIE...

...YET HER LIFE
IS SUCH A TORMENT
THAT DEATH WOULD
BE A MERCY.

IT DOESN'T
HAVE TO BE
THAT WAY.

HAVEN'T YOU
EVER FELT LIKE
YOU WERE IN THE
GRIP OF FORCES FAR
GREATER THAN
YOURSELF?

SOME
THINGS
AREN'T
ALLOWED
TO CHANGE.

I AM OLD,
CHARLES, AND
SO VERY TIRED. I
HAVE NO MORE
STRENGTH.

THE PATH
OF MY LIFE
IS PILED
HIGH WITH
BODIES.

MY OWN CHILDREN
YEARN FOR THE LOVE
OF A FAMILY THEY'VE
NEVER KNOWN, YET CAN
THINK OF THEIR FATHER
ONLY WITH SHAME
AND REVULSION.

YOU'RE MORE
THAN MY FRIEND,
CHARLES, YOU'RE
MY BROTHER.

I HAVE NO
ONE ELSE TO
TURN TO. NO ONE
I DARE TRUST.

I'VE DONE SUCH HARM--
ESPECIALLY TO THOSE I
SHOULD HAVE LOVED MORE
THAN MY LIFE.

I'M HOPING
FOR A MIRACLE.
EVEN ONE
I DON'T
DESERVE.



WE'RE BACK.

ON
GENOSHA,
YES, MY SPELL
HAS RUN ITS
COURSE.

WHAT
HAVE YOU
LEARNED?

THAT SOME OF US HOLD
ONTO GUILT AND SHAME FAR TOO
LONG. THERE'S A STRANGE SECURITY
IN MISERY, IT'S ALMOST COMFORTABLE.
TAKING THE RISK OF MOVING ON,
THAT'S TERRIFYING. APPLIES TO
ERIK, APPLIES TO ME.

FOR ERIK,
IT'S ALWAYS
BEEN ABOUT
FAMILY.

BUILDING A
HOME--A WORLD--
WHERE HE CAN BE
SAFE, WHERE HE NEED
NEVER AGAIN FEEL
AFRAID.

IT ALWAYS
GETS TWISTED
BECAUSE THE
CHILD IN HIM CAN'T
ESCAPE THOSE
NIGHTMARES,
AND WANTS
REVENGE.

YOU COULD
JUST AS EASILY
BE DESCRIBING
WANDA.



THE HELL
OF IT IS, THE
FORCE THAT
DRIVES
THEM BOTH
IS LOVE.



FROM
THAT LOVE,
FOR THAT
LOVE...



...THEY
YEARN--
THEY
STRIVE--
FOR AN
IDEAL.



WHAT
COULD BE
MORE PRIMAL,
MORE
PROFOUND?

COMBINE
THEIR POWER
WITH SUCH
PASSION...
ANYTHING IS
POSSIBLE

EVEN
REDEMPTION.



THE STORY
CONTINUES
IN
**HOUSE OF
#1!**

SWORD STROKES

Greetings, EXCALIBUR fans, and welcome to the last edition of *Sword Strokes*...for a while, anyway! That's right—EXCALIBUR will be going on hiatus for a few months, but never fear, it'll be returning shortly with an all-new team that spins directly out the events of this summer's HOUSE OF M crossover! Look for NEW EXCALIBUR #1 to hit the stands in November!

To find out what happens to Professor X, Magneto and Wanda, make sure to pick up HOUSE OF M #1, on sale next week! This is one crossover event you aren't going to want to miss, since it will forever alter the destinies of both the X-Men and the New Avengers...in ways that will shock you!

Check out the following HOUSE OF M-related titles on sale in June:



HOUSE OF M #1



HOUSE OF M #2



SPIDER-MAN: HOUSE OF M #1

And make sure to return in November for NEW EXCALIBUR #1, which will pick up right where HOUSE OF M leaves off!

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**DON'T MISS
HOUSE OF M #1,
ON SALE
JUNE 1st!**